

# United Conservatives Alberta Strong & Free

Getting Alberta Back to Work

# CONTENTS

4

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**THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

92

---

**STANDING UP FOR ALBERTA**

110

---

**STRONG TEAM, READY TO LEAD**

**13**

**GETTING ALBERTANS BACK TO  
WORK**

**47**

**MAKING LIFE BETTER  
FOR ALBERTANS**

# THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Are you better off today than you were four years ago?

For most Albertans, the answer is "no."

The NDP first came to office four years ago with a lot of promise. Albertans wanted change. They were tired of entitlement, and many voters were willing to take a chance on a new direction. Albertans gave the NDP the benefit of the doubt, and rightly so. After all, it was new, it had inherited tough challenges, but it meant well.

But over time, what Albertans saw was a government that made decisions based on ideology instead of common sense. A government that thought it could tax, borrow, and regulate its way to prosperity. As a result, it made a bad situation much worse.

It's true that when the NDP came to office, Alberta's economy was struggling from low commodity prices.

But Premier Notley failed to understand the most basic rule of sound economic policy: first, do no harm.

Instead of trying to help employers who were struggling to keep the lights on, the NDP hit them with a 20% tax hike on day one.

Instead of lowering costs for families coping with unemployment and less pay, the NDP raised the cost of everything – from home heating to groceries – with their carbon tax.

Instead of encouraging investors to come to Alberta, the NDP drove them away with the uncertainty of a royalty review, a lawsuit against power producers, new red tape, and a doomed pipeline alliance with Justin Trudeau.



Individually, each of these policies were bad ideas. Imposing them in the midst of the steepest recession in a generation led to the worst economic record of any Alberta government since the Great Depression.

### **Hard times for families**

Today, 183,000 Albertans are out of work. There are nearly 25,000 fewer private sector jobs than when the NDP took power four years ago. And it's getting worse: about 48,000 full-time jobs have been lost in the last four months alone. Calgary has the highest unemployment of any city in Canada, and Edmonton has the third highest.

The problem is even worse for Alberta's youth. In October of 2014, Alberta's labour force participation rate for ages 15-24 was 69%. Today, it has fallen to 62%. Employment for young men is at its lowest level in our economy's history.

Tens of thousands of Albertans have given up looking for work and a growing number are going longer and longer between jobs. In 2014, the average duration between jobs was 14 weeks. Today the average is 22 weeks.

Even those who continue to work face severe challenges. Average take-home pay has gone down by \$6,400 a year. At the same time, bankruptcies are up by more than 25% since 2014 and insolvencies have increased by more than 75%.

Home sales have plummeted. Last year the Calgary region recorded a 14% decline in sales to its lowest level since the 1990s. Many other regions have reported sales activity at least 18% below their 10-year average.

To put it bluntly, this was a terrible time to hit Alberta's families with higher taxes and expenses. But that's exactly what the NDP did with their ideological policies, starting with the carbon tax cash grab.

The carbon tax costs Alberta's families and employers about \$1.4 billion per year. The NDP wants to increase it from \$30/tonne to \$50/tonne - a 67% increase. That means taking \$2.5 billion from families and employers every year. This can only mean one thing: more job losses.

### **Hard times for job creators**

Not long ago, one of Alberta's core advantages was having the lowest tax rate for employers, at 10%. That changed with the NDP's arrival in 2015. The Notley government raised the rate to 12%, making our business tax rate higher than Quebec's and Ontario's and resulting in Alberta losing our advantage over both BC and Saskatchewan and almost every U.S. state while the Americans cut business taxes by a third.

At the same time, the NDP increased WCB payroll taxes, helped Prime Minister Justin Trudeau raise CPP payroll taxes on workers and employers, and imposed massive new red tape.

The NDP went on to hike provincial property taxes and make a mess of Power Purchase Agreements, which will cost families and employers billions of dollars in higher power prices over the next decade.

They increased the minimum wage by 50%, driving up labour costs for small business in the middle of a recession. This ideological decision led directly to layoffs.

According to Restaurants Canada, the average number of workers per restaurant dropped from 13 to 11.7 between 2015 and 2018 – that's 10,200 fewer employees. Nobody was harder hit than Alberta's youth, whose labour participation rate plummeted.

Under the NDP, Alberta just isn't working.

### **Exodus of investment**

Alberta's oil and gas industry, once the envy of the nation, has been gutted by the NDP's ideological policies and red tape, and their "social license" alliance with Justin Trudeau.

Since the NDP took office, two major pipeline projects have been abandoned and two more are hopelessly bogged down in red tape. At the same time the NDP failed to fight Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's disastrous "No More Pipelines" Bill C-69, or tanker ban Bill C-48.

The red tape goes much further. Today the average timeline for an oil well approval is at least four months longer in Alberta than in BC, Saskatchewan, and key U.S. states. The regulatory and governmental costs to drill in Alberta are double the same costs in U.S. states like Texas, North Dakota, and Colorado.

Investors now see Alberta as a high-cost, high-regulation market. As a direct result, the world's largest and most experienced energy companies are pulling out of Alberta. Since 2015, investment has fallen by 61.3% in the oil and gas extraction sector.

You can see the effect of this mass exodus in the hearts of our largest cities, with climbing office vacancies in downtown Calgary and Edmonton. Calgary's vacancy rate has increased for the past three years to over 25%. Edmonton's rate is not much better.

When it comes to declining investment, our energy sector is not alone. Since 2015, investment has also fallen by:

- 7% in agriculture and forestry
- 10% in manufacturing
- 21% in construction
- 27% in finance, insurance, and real estate
- 35% in transportation
- 36% in utilities
- 65 % in retail trade

This record of failure is why Alberta is projected to have the worst economic growth in Canada this year, and why our economy shrank by more than 3% between 2015 and 2018.

## **\$100 billion debt hole**

Alberta's economy is stagnant. Unemployment is high, workers' pay is down, businesses are struggling, and investment is fleeing.

As a direct result, government revenues aren't keeping up with the NDP's increased spending. And Alberta's total debt has climbed from \$12.9 billion in 2014/15 to \$58.6 billion in 2018/19.

This fiscal cliff is not something government can ignore. The annual interest on Alberta's debt has nearly tripled from \$722 million in 2014/15 to \$1.9 billion in 2019. We're now spending more on debt interest than we are on 17 of our 21 government departments.

The NDP's response to this fiscal crisis is to increase taxes, further punishing our struggling families and employers. The Notley administration has raised taxes and fees 97 times in four years.

It's not working. Just look at the NDP's first budget, which predicted that higher taxes would bring in an extra \$6 billion. In reality, total tax revenues were \$8 billion lower than expected. You can't draw blood from a stone.

The NDP's failure to understand basic economics has Alberta on a path towards \$100 billion of debt by 2023/24 with annual interest costs rising to \$3.6 billion. Alberta's debt will amount to \$80,000 for a family of four. The NDP's debt spiral will only put more pressure on public services already suffering under inefficient NDP mismanagement.

## **Our vision for a strong and free Alberta**

The NDP's record of failure is reflected in virtually every statistic available, from employment, to wages, to stagnant growth.

We can do so much better.

That's why Alberta's United Conservative Party was created. Born of the province-wide free enterprise unity movement, it is a broad coalition reflecting today's Alberta that seeks to create a new Alberta Advantage.

We have a bold plan to bring change that gets Alberta's economy back to work.

We will fight without relent to build pipelines. We will stand up for Alberta and



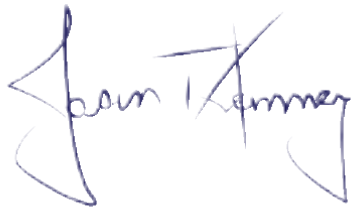
demand a fair deal in Canada. We will fight back against the foreign funded special interests who are trying to landlock our energy.

We will grow Alberta's economy, create good jobs, and fight for a fair deal in Canada to get pipelines built.

By showing the world that we are open for business again, United Conservatives will generate the economic growth we need to bring balance back to our province's finances, while ensuring the future of high quality front-line services like health care and education.

On April 16th, Albertans will have a choice to make. Between a failed record of higher taxes, huge job losses, and \$100 billion debt that risks our future. Or our United Conservative plan to scrap the carbon tax, get Alberta back to work, and stand up to Justin Trudeau and those who are holding us back.

It's time for a change. Positive change that creates good jobs, brings common sense to government, and builds an Alberta that is strong and free.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Kenney". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping 'J' and a crossbar that extends to the right.

Jason Kenney,  
Leader, United Conservative Party

# United

## Conservatives

All America Strong & Free



# A UCP GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE 3 PRIORITIES

**1**

**GETTING ALBERTANS  
BACK TO WORK**

**2**

**MAKING LIFE BETTER  
FOR ALBERTANS**

**3**

**STANDING UP FOR  
ALBERTA**

# OUR TOP 5 COMMITMENTS

1

## JOB CREATION PLAN

Enact a Job Creation Tax Cut that reduces the tax on job creators by 1/3 from 12% to 8% over four years and creates at least 55,000 new full-time jobs

Cut red tape on job creators by 1/3 over four years to get Alberta working

Pass the *Open for Business Act* to make it easier for job creators to hire workers

3

## STAND UP FOR ALBERTA

Stand up for Alberta against Trudeau and foreign funded special interests that are trying to land lock our interests

Fight for pipelines and a fair deal for Alberta, including a referendum on equalization payments

2

## REPEAL THE CARBON TAX

Bill 1 of a United Conservative government will be the *Carbon Tax Repeal Act*

At \$1.4 billion, this will be the largest tax cut in Alberta's history.

We will stop the NDP's planned 67% increase to the carbon tax and sue the Trudeau government if it tries to impose a carbon tax on Alberta

4

## GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

Balance the budget in the first term through economic growth and prudent spending without cutting front-line services

5

## PROTECT QUALITY HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION



A blue-tinted background image of an oil pumpjack in a field.

**1**

# GETTING ALBERTANS BACK TO WORK

"You ask an Albertan and he'll tell you, 'I want to be an entrepreneur.'"

Entrepreneur Bob Dhillon

"In Alberta, free enterprise is a way of life, not a slogan."

Peter C. Newman



JOBS  
ECONOMY  
PIPELINES

# GETTING ALBERTA BACK TO WORK

Alberta has a proud tradition of a free enterprise economy with opportunities for all. The evidence is clear that competitive tax rates, private property rights, and sensible regulation create growth and jobs.

The United Conservative plan to get Albertans back to work includes the following commitments:

- **Bill 1: The *Carbon Tax Repeal Act*** will scrap the NDP's \$1.4 billion tax on everything, create 6,000 jobs, and allow Alberta families and job creators to keep more of their own money
- **The Job Creation Tax Cut** will lower the tax burden on employers from 12% to 8%, creating 55,000 jobs and growing our economy by \$12.7 billion
- **Bill 2: The *Open for Business Act*** will give Alberta's workers more freedom, restore their right to a secret ballot, and bring balance back to Alberta's labour laws to get job creators investing in Alberta again
- **The Red Tape Reduction Action Plan** will cut red tape by one-third to reduce costs and speed up approvals, freeing job creators to get more Albertans back to work
- **The *Farm Freedom and Safety Act*** will repeal and replace Bill 6. We will listen to farmers, ranchers, and agriculture workers that the NDP ignored to let our farmers grow again
- **Building Public Infrastructure** to support services like health care and education
- **A Plan to Re-energize Oil and Gas** that will speed up approvals, cut red tape, unblock natural gas shipments, and support LNG exports
- **Implementing the Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) Fund** to achieve real greenhouse gas emission reductions while encouraging investment across industries
- **A Plan for Lower Power Prices** that ensures Alberta's electricity market is affordable for consumers and job creators and produces market-driven green energy

- **Job Creation in Alberta's Tourism** sector will come from a stable and predictable funding formula for Travel Alberta that links its funding and performance to tourism industry outcomes as a whole
- **Standing up for Forestry Jobs** will ensure that this sustainable sector can thrive, rather than struggle under proposed federal and provincial restrictions
- **The Alberta Advantage Immigration Plan** will attract newcomers who will start business, invest, and create jobs
- **A Smarter Approach to Innovation** will make Alberta a magnet for investment in new technologies including artificial intelligence, health sciences, geothermal energy, and information technology.



# BILL 1:

## THE CARBON TAX REPEAL ACT

The NDP introduced the largest tax increase in Alberta history without campaigning on it. The job-killing carbon tax takes in \$1.4 billion each year, making it more expensive to hire employees, move goods around the province, and heat homes.

And the current carbon tax is just the start – the NDP plans to increase their cash grab by at least 67% to \$2.5 billion, in step with Prime Minister Trudeau. A United Conservative government will scrap the carbon tax, leaving that money in the pockets of families, businesses, and non-profits while creating 6,000 new jobs by 2024.

### A United Conservative government will:

- Introduce Bill 1, *The Carbon Tax Repeal Act*
- Subject any future carbon tax to the *Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act* which requires all sales taxes to be voted on in a referendum
- Release detailed assessments of the impact of the carbon tax and the NDP's "Climate Leadership Plan" on Alberta's economy, and on key sectors including electricity, oil and gas, and homes
- Share an impact report with Albertans of the costs of adopting Justin Trudeau and the NDP's plan for a \$50/tonne carbon tax
- Challenge the constitutionality of the Trudeau carbon tax by filing a judicial reference to the Court of Appeal, while continuing to support similar challenges by the governments of Saskatchewan and Ontario

### Scrapping the carbon tax will:

#### 1. Help Albertans pay their bills

Based on Budget 2018 estimates, at \$50,000 in income:

- A single Albertan will save \$286
- A single Albertan with two children will save \$405
- A single Albertan with three or more children will save \$524

Using data compiled by economists Trevor Tombe and Jennifer Winter at the University of Calgary,<sup>1</sup> we calculate that 725,000 Alberta families will receive tax cuts ranging from \$25 to \$1,150 under our proposal.

## 2. Create 6,000 jobs

One Slave Lake sawmill pays nearly \$500,000 in carbon taxes every year, not including extra carbon tax costs for log-hauling. That equals ten \$50,000 jobs that could be created. Stokes Economics estimates that scrapping the NDP carbon tax will create 6,000 jobs across the province.

## 3. Save small businesses almost \$4,500 annually

The average small and medium-sized business in Alberta consumes an estimated<sup>3</sup> 1,500 gigajoules of natural gas per year, which equates to \$2,276 per year in gross carbon taxes for natural gas.

The average small and medium-sized business in Alberta consumes an estimated 32,689 litres of gasoline and diesel per year. That's \$2,200 per year in gross carbon taxes for gasoline and diesel.

Together those work out to almost \$4,500 annually in carbon tax costs for every small or medium-sized business.

### Average savings for an Alberta small or medium-size business with carbon tax elimination

Natural gas savings	\$2,275
Gasoline and diesel savings	\$2,200
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL savings annually</b>	<b><u>\$4,475</u></b>

A United Conservative government will scrap the carbon tax to save Albertans \$1.4 billion and create 6,000 new jobs.

# JOB CREATION TAX CUT

Alberta led Canada in jobs, incomes, and growth in recent decades in part because we had the lowest business taxes. This advantage attracted hundreds of companies, like Canadian Pacific and Imperial Oil, with thousands of new high paying direct and indirect jobs as a result. By raising the business tax rate by 20%, the NDP gave us higher business tax rates than Ontario and Quebec while eliminating our advantage over B.C. and Saskatchewan.

While the NDP is making us less competitive, the world is changing. The United States has cut business taxes by a third, creating an incentive for Canadian companies to shift operations south.

Government revenues *declined* after the NDP increased taxes. Corporate tax revenues will bring in \$4.1 billion this year, compared to \$5.8 billion when the rate was at 10%. The verdict is clear: higher business tax rates kill jobs and reduce government revenue.

Reversing this trend won't happen overnight, but steadily dropping our business tax rate down to 8% combined with other measures like red tape reductions, will command the attention of job creators across Canada and beyond.

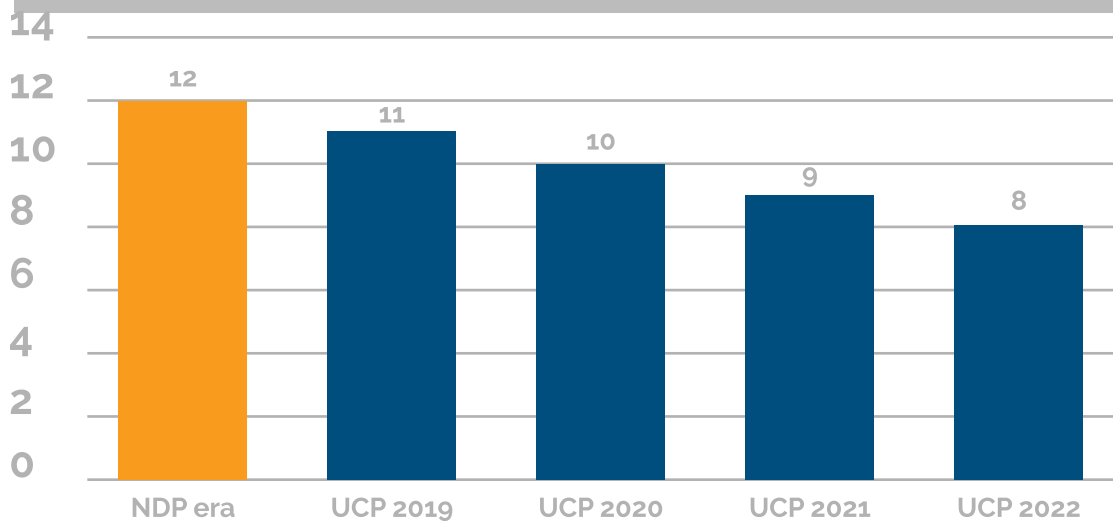
## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Enact a Job Creation Tax Cut to reduce the general income tax rate on businesses from 12% to 8% over four years
- Keep the small business tax rate at 2%
- Further improve Alberta's tax competitiveness once the budget is balanced

# THE UCP JOB CREATION TAX CUT

2019-2022

General Business Tax Rate



According to an analysis by leading economist Dr. Jack Mintz, the Job Creation Tax Cut will lead to the creation of at least 55,000 full-time private sector jobs.

University of Calgary political economist Dr. Bev Dahlby estimates that this tax cut will generate:

- A \$12.7 billion increase in nominal GDP
- A 6.5% increase in per capita real GDP
- \$1.2 billion in additional government revenues by 2023-24

Jason Kenney's tax-cut plan could remake Alberta (and maybe Canada).

Terence Corcoran, former editorial page editor, Financial Post  
- March 5, 2019, Financial Post -

"There is an overwhelming amount of empirical research and evidence showing the positive effects of corporate tax cuts on investment, job creation and increased wages for workers. The research

of my organization clearly demonstrates that, in the end, it is workers who, de facto, for the most part, end up supporting the cost of corporate taxes."

Michel-Kelly Gagnon,  
President and CEO of the Montreal Economic Institute

**"MAKING ALBERTA  
BUSINESSES MORE  
COMPETITIVE BY  
LOWERING TAXES  
MAKES EVERYONE  
A WINNER."**

FRANCO TERRAZZANO,  
CANADIAN TAXPAYERS FEDERATION

# BILL 2:

## THE *OPEN FOR BUSINESS ACT*

Under the NDP, Alberta is in a jobs crisis, with the highest unemployment outside Atlantic Canada. We need urgent action to get Albertans back to work. That is why a United Conservative government will enact policies that relentlessly focus on creating jobs and prosperity. The *Open for Business Act* will restore workplace democracy and bring balance back to labour law.

We will also retain some recent NDP changes which have clarified worker rights and provided for greater compassionate leave.

### **Wages**

#### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Retain the general \$15.00 minimum wage
- Introduce a Youth Job Creation Wage of \$13.00 for workers who are 17 years of age or younger to encourage job creators to hire young Albertans for their first job
- Appoint a Minimum Wage Expert Panel to:
  - Analyse and publish all of the available economic data on the labour market impact of the NDP's 50% increase in the minimum wage
  - Assess whether hospitality industry workers who serve alcohol would likely generate higher net incomes (i.e. by working more hours) with a wage differential similar to those that exist in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia
- Return to a regular / irregular workday distinction for calculating holiday pay
- Return to a holiday pay qualifying period of 30 work days in the 12 months preceding a general holiday
- Reverse the change in 2018 that eliminated the option for workers and employers to develop straight-time banked hours arrangements (this has no impact on overtime pay)

## **Workplace democracy and balance in labour legislation**

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Restore the mandatory secret ballot for union certification votes
- Protect workers from being forced to fund political parties and causes without explicit opt-in approval
- Reverse the replacement worker ban in the public sector
- Require the Labour Relations Board to provide legal support to all union workers in order to better understand and exercise their rights
- Strengthen new provisions in the Labour Relations Code that have reduced the duplication of employment claims in multiple forums (such as labour relations, employment standards, arbitration, and privacy)

### **A United Conservative government will also retain:**

- Some of the new procedural powers given to the Labour Relations Board, Employment Standards, and labour arbitrators such as marshalling powers that allow the focusing of complaints
- New procedures relating to the duty of fair representation (e.g. the obligation of union and its process to properly represent a union member)
- The current essential services legislation
- New forms of leave adopted in recent legislation including:
  - Personal and Family Responsibility Leave
  - Long-Term Illness and Injury Leave
  - Bereavement Leave
  - Domestic Violence Leave
  - Citizenship Ceremony Leave – A new unpaid leave that provides up to a half-day of job protection for employees attending a citizenship ceremony
  - Critical Illness of an Adult Family Member
  - Critical Illness of a Child
  - Death or Disappearance of a Child

**A United Conservative government will bring balance back to Alberta's labour laws, restore workplace democracy, and incentivize the creation of youth employment.**

# RED TAPE REDUCTION ACTION PLAN

Red tape is a costly and growing burden on Alberta businesses, and it kills jobs. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) says red tape costs \$6,744 per employee<sup>4</sup>—that's almost \$34,000 for a business with five staff.

The CFIB also gave Alberta the only 'F' in its provincial red tape report card. That explains why the Alberta Chamber of Commerce recently said that, "mounting costs being layered on business by changes to government regulation and policy is the single greatest challenge to business competitiveness and shared prosperity."

## Alberta's grades on red tape from the CFIB

<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
D	D	N/A	F	F

### A United Conservative government will:

- Pass a *Red Tape Reduction Act* to measure, report, and reduce the province's regulatory decisions to be made
- Appoint a Minister for Red Tape Reduction to lead the Action Plan and meet the one-third reduction target
- Form industry panels to help the Minister identify unnecessary red tape in every sector of Alberta's economy
- Implement a "One-In / One-Out" rule requiring ministries to identify at least one offsetting regulation for every new regulation created
- Create a Red Tape Challenge Website at [StopRedTape.ca](http://StopRedTape.ca) to replicate the United Kingdom's successful Red Tape Challenge by crowdsourcing input from businesses, organisations, and the public on which regulations should be improved, kept, or scrapped



- Cut red tape within government to allow the public sector to focus on serving Albertans
- Move from a process to outcome-based regulatory approach
- Fight for an end to interprovincial barriers to free trade

**A United Conservative government will cut red tape by one-third to reduce costs, encouraging new and existing businesses to get Albertans back to work.**



# THE *FARM FREEDOM ACT*:

## Helping our Farmers Grow Again

Alberta's agriculture industry helped to build our province, and under a United Conservative government it will be a key part of a prosperous economic future.

Our farmers and ranchers are going through trying times. The carbon tax, higher WCB premiums, new labour regulations, power prices, and market access failures are threatening the sustainability of these multi-generational farms and ranches. Since the NDP came to office, employment in Alberta's agriculture sector has fallen by 19% – that's 11,300 jobs that no longer exist.

United Conservatives understand how vital this sector is to Alberta's economy and food supply. We also understand that keeping these farms and ranches sustainable is vital to the fabric of Alberta's history and culture.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Immediately launch comprehensive consultations with farmers, ranchers, agriculture workers, and others on how best to balance the unique economic pressures of farming with the need for a common sense, flexible farm safety regime. The goal of these consultations will be to develop recommendations for the introduction of the *Farm Freedom and Safety Act (FFSA)*, which will be passed into law in 2019. The FFSA will:
  - Repeal Bill 6 (i.e. the 2015 *Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act*)
  - Require employers to maintain workplace insurance for farm workers, but allow employers to choose whether to purchase insurance from the market or from the WCB as long as basic standards of coverage are met for such things as medical and return-to-work support services, and protection against loss of income
  - Exempt small farms from employment legislation, following the example of New Brunswick that exempts farms that "employ three or fewer employees over a substantial period of the year (not including family members)"
  - Ensure basic safety standards

- Recognize that operating a farm is unlike operating a conventional business and that farmers and ranchers require much greater flexibility in meeting employment standards.
- Minimize the red tape burden on farmers and ranchers
- Strengthen property rights by pursuing the constitutional entrenchment of property rights and adopting an *Alberta Property Rights Protection Act*
- Fight for market access and reduce interprovincial trade barriers
- Streamline the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation to improve services and responsiveness to farmers
- Eliminate the carbon tax and reduce the corporate tax and red tape burden on farmers and ranchers by one-third
- Fight back against attacks on agriculture by well-funded special interests - in many ways, these resemble the campaign of vilification targeting Alberta's energy industry in recent years
- Ensure that farmers, not government, set key agriculture research priorities
- Perform a comprehensive review of risk mitigation programs
- Consult on land sales in order to replace good agricultural land lost to urban expansion by cooperating with municipalities seeking auctions on parcels of Crown land for agricultural use, where appropriate. Such disposition of Crown land would be subject to consultation with First Nations communities and others. In one case, MacKenzie County seeks to complete an auction of about 100,000 acres. To put this request in perspective, there are approximately 100 million acres of Alberta Crown land

**A United Conservative government will repeal Bill 6 and reverse damaging policies across the agriculture sector to ensure sustainable farms and ranches and help get Albertans back to work.**



# BUILDING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Alberta needs to plan and build infrastructure to meet the needs of our future population and grow the economy.

Alberta has led the country in transportation infrastructure investment in recent decades, and this has helped every sector in our economy to grow.

The NDP have failed to deliver predictable funding or a transparent list of infrastructure priorities and have let ideology get in the way of making efficient use of common-sense financing options like public-private partnerships (P3s).

United Conservatives will focus on infrastructure investments that support key public services, like health and education, and our economy, like roads.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Maintain the existing Government of Alberta Capital Plan for 2019/20 through 2022/23
- Pass the *Alberta Infrastructure Act* that will provide transparency on prioritization criteria, establish predictable funding levels, and ensure adequate maintenance of existing assets
- Use alternative financing, i.e. public-private partnerships (P3s), design and build, construction management, etc., for procurement of capital projects when there is a solid business case and value for money can be achieved for taxpayers
- Limit the use of “cost plus contracts” for procurement of capital projects
- Prepare and publicly release an annual *Government of Alberta Infrastructure Report* as part of the province's Annual Report to provide detailed information to Albertans on the progress made in meeting the various commitments in the Five-Year Capital Plan
- Prepare and publicly release a 20-year Strategic Capital Plan for Alberta

**A United Conservative government will efficiently deliver the public infrastructure needed to get Albertans back to work.**

# CREATING JOBS IN OIL AND GAS

Alberta's energy sector is truly a remarkable success story. It is a global leader in environmental standards, labour standards, and technological innovation.

Unlike the NDP, which has shown their underlying opposition to the development of our resources, a United Conservative government will proudly stand up for our 151,000 energy workers. We have a clear plan to get our energy sector creating jobs again by improving the regulation of energy, revitalizing our natural gas sector, and creating a framework to reclaim abandoned wells in Alberta.

## **Royalty Guarantee**

Recent Alberta governments shook investor confidence with royalty reviews. A United Conservative government will guarantee in law that the royalty regime in place when a well is permitted will remain in place for that project in perpetuity.

## **Drilling and Exploration**

Under the NDP, there has been a massive decline in exploration activity, with capital expenditure down by 75% since 2014.

A United Conservative government would help to get rigs back in the field.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Reclassify service rigs as off-road vehicles, such as farm equipment
- Replace rural road permits with an annual provincial permit
- Reclassify service rigs as provincial carriers even when crossing provincial boundaries
- Extend BOP Level IV certification from three to five years
- Extend mast and overhead equipment level IV certification from 1,000 to 2,000 operating days

## **Intervene in NEB Hearings**

A United Conservative government will ensure that Alberta intervenes at all

National Energy Board hearings that affect Alberta oil and gas interests.

**Energy Diversification**

Alberta has an opportunity to attract major private sector capital investment to leverage our inexpensive feedstock into petrochemical diversification and upgrading. We will respect agreements made by the current government under the Petrochemical Diversification Program (PDP) and will be open to extending the PDP royalty tax credit model to incentivize future projects.

**The Alberta Energy Regulator**

The AER should ensure that energy development occurs in an efficient and environmentally responsible manner. We must preserve Alberta's reputation as a world leader in developing resources responsibly – but we must also restore our reputation with investors as a leader in predictable and efficient regulation.

Under the NDP, the performance of the AER has declined despite hiring more staff. The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers now [estimates](#)<sup>5</sup> that getting wells approved in Alberta can take up to twice as long as in Saskatchewan and four times longer than in Texas. It is no surprise that our U.S. competitors are enjoying an oil boom while our industry languishes.

Well licensing times		
	Range of days it takes to get a well approved	ADVANTAGE OVER ALBERTA (days)
Alberta	79 to 220*	
Bristish Columbia	90-128	130
Saskatchewan	72-120	148
U.S. Federal	120	100
U.S. Freehold-Texas	<30-60 days	190
U.S. Freehold-Other	90	130

Source: CAPP. A competitive policy and regulatory framework for Alberta's upstream oil and natural gas industry

**A United Conservative government will:**

- Appoint a new Board of Directors to the AER that will focus on improving approval times and cutting red tape
- Establish clear benchmarks for approval times, and maintain a public dashboard of the AER's key performance metrics
- Aim to have the fastest approvals in North America, reducing AER timelines by at least 50%

- Streamline and expedite the AER's review processes to bring greater certainty and stability to our investment climate

## **Revitalizing Alberta's Natural Gas Industry**

Canada is the fourth largest natural gas producer in the world, and more than half of our production comes from Alberta. Tens of thousands of Albertans work in natural gas and many more work in related industries like our petrochemical sector. Western Canada now has a large resource base in the Deep Basin and Montney areas of western Alberta and northeast B.C.

The lack of pipeline access is forcing natural gas producers to sell their product at a massive discount. In 2018 American producers sold for roughly \$3.00/GJ, while Alberta's spot price averaged just under \$1.00/GJ (US) – nearly 70% less. We are practically giving away this valuable resource that belongs to all Albertans.

A United Conservative government will implement a robust natural gas strategy so that our producers can create jobs for Albertans.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Appoint an Associate Minister for Natural Gas
- Appoint an Associate Deputy Minister for Natural Gas in the Department of Energy
- Review and implement key recommendations of the 2018 Roadmap to Recovery (aka the Kvisle Panel)
- Increase regulatory efficiency and streamline project approvals to increase the pace of activity
- Work with producers, the National Energy Board, and TransCanada to evaluate changes to regulations and policies pertaining to the NGTL system, including tolls and tariffs, and interconnection to the TransCanada Pipeline System through to the export points in Saskatchewan and Manitoba
- Work with producers, TransCanada, and regulators to increase throughput, reduce price volatility, and lower shipper tolls on major natural gas pipeline systems
- Work with the natural gas industry to facilitate infrastructure for shipping Alberta gas to Asian markets through Liquefied Natural Gas projects



## **Oil and Gas Well and Facility Environmental Reclamation**

There are a large number of suspended or inactive oil and gas wells and associated facilities in Alberta that have reached the end of their economic lives.

Under the current climate of reduced oil and natural gas prices, this inventory of suspended wells and facilities has grown substantially.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Streamline the process for well and facility abandonment and environmental reclamation to reduce costs and increase the rate at which wells that will not be used again are officially “abandoned”
- Work jointly with the AER and industry to overhaul the liability management framework in Alberta, ensuring liabilities are covered without unduly discouraging new investment
- Propose that the federal government provide tax incentives and financial support such as “green” flow-through shares for the abandonment and environmental reclamation of oil and gas wells and associated surface facilities
- Urge the federal government to establish alternative financial vehicles that focus on environmental reclamation in the oil and gas industry, such as adapting Qualifying Environmental Trusts (QET) to include well decommissioning costs

**A United Conservative government will streamline the AER, implement a robust natural gas strategy, and work with industry and the federal government on abandoned wells to get Albertans back to work.**

# THE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION (TIER) FUND

The world is grappling with the tension between our need for the carbon-based energy industry and a consensus that its emissions are directly contributing to climate change. The United Conservatives are committed to responsible energy development and that includes action to mitigate greenhouse emissions and reduce their contribution to climate change.

We need a sensible approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, the NDP's Carbon Competitiveness Incentive Regulation (CCIR) has become just another "cash cow" for government. According to an internal government analysis<sup>6</sup> the costs associated with the CCIR are estimated to be approximately \$1.3 billion/year and are anticipated to result in "greater employment loss than estimated impacts associated with the coal phase-out<sup>7</sup>." The CCIR has also introduced significant uncertainty into the marketplace, which has hurt Alberta's economy.

In 2007, Alberta became the first jurisdiction in North America to bring in a form of carbon pricing for emitters with the Specified Gas Emitters Regulations (SGER). The United Conservatives believe that restoring an updated version of this model will produce better environmental and fiscal results than the CCIR introduced by the NDP. We can reassure investors while generating real emissions reductions by implementing an improved system for larger emitters.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Bring in a new Technology Innovation and Emissions Reductions (TIER) regime for large industrial emitters in Alberta effective January 1, 2020. This will be an improved system to manage emissions from Alberta's large industries (including oil and gas and electricity generation) which are responsible for about 60% of Alberta's greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Under this new system, existing facilities with emissions above 100,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (or equivalent), other than electricity generators, will have to meet an emissions performance target of reducing their emissions intensity by 10% (increasing by 1% per year) compared to their average performance between 2016 and 2018. That can be achieved by either: reducing facility

emissions, purchasing credits from facilities that have exceeded their compliance targets, purchasing accredited offsets from emissions reductions occurring elsewhere in the Alberta economy, or paying into the TIER Fund at a rate of \$20/tonne.

- Reduce the compliance price from \$30/tonne to \$20/tonne
- Require large final emitters (LFEs) in the electricity sector to meet a "good-as-best-gas" performance standard, which means that over 60% of coal fired electricity emissions will be subject to compliance
- Implement a TIER Fund which will help companies reduce emissions with cleaner technology

The first \$100 million in revenues and 50% of remaining revenues paid into the TIER Fund will be used for new and cleaner Alberta-based technologies that reduce carbon emissions even further, including new and improved oil sands extraction technology and supporting research and investment in carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS). The remaining TIER funds will also support:

- Reductions in Alberta's deficit
- \$20 million of the \$30 million annual budget for the energy "war room" that will share the truth about Alberta's resource sector

In total, TIER will generate estimated TIER Fund revenues of \$142.5 million in 2019/20 (and \$630 million in total when combined with existing CCIR revenues until December 31, 2019) and \$570 million in 2020/21.

**A United Conservative will commit to responsible energy development and a sensible approach to greenhouse gas reductions that will get Albertans back to work.**

# AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY FOR ALBERTA CONSUMERS

For decades, Alberta's competitive market for electricity kept prices low and encouraged investment, including market-financed green power.

The NDP government has made costly and unnecessary changes to the system costing taxpayers and consumers billions of dollars. Albertans are only just beginning to see the costs created by this ideological approach.

Before the NDP disrupted it, Alberta had a market-friendly electricity system that brought \$20 billion in investment to build 10,000 megawatts of new power since 1996, including 1,727 megawatts of market-based green energy without subsidies. In the future, EDC Associates estimates that a market-driven approach to renewables will add 1,566 megawatts of renewable power through 2030, without the need for any new taxpayer or consumer subsidies.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- End costly subsidies after the Renewable Energy Program's round 3
- Ask the Auditor General of Alberta to conduct a special duty audit of the NDP-incurred financial losses on the power purchase agreements held through the Balancing Pool
- Immediately tender a bid for a comprehensive independent assessment of the costs of the NDP Climate Leadership Plan
- Consult on whether Alberta should return to an energy-only market or create a capacity market, reporting back to Albertans within 90-days
- Welcome market-driven green power to Alberta and the jobs that such renewable energy producers will create

**A United Conservative government will ensure Alberta has a market-based electricity system that welcomes green power, providing affordable electricity for job-creators to get Albertans back to work.**

# JOB CREATION IN ALBERTA'S TOURISM SECTOR

A strong tourism sector will create jobs and growth in Alberta. Destination Marketing and Management Organizations, such as Travel Alberta, play an important role in creating this growth.

The United Conservatives support innovative approaches to sustaining funding for tourism promotion and marketing through partnerships with the private sector.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Direct Travel Alberta to work with tourism stakeholders to develop a new 10-year Tourism Strategy recognizing the role that the private sector can play in assisting government in promoting Alberta as a tourist destination
- Reorient the mandate of Travel Alberta towards more active facilitation of private sector funding and public-private partnerships for its tourism marketing and promotion activities
- Reprofile a portion of existing government funding for tourism into a Tourism Partnership Incentive Fund (TPIF), managed through Travel Alberta, to attract and identify sources of private sector support for tourism
- Remove intrusive laws, rules, and regulations which impede the development of Alberta's tourism sector
- Work with the federal government and airport authorities in Calgary and Edmonton to expand air transport agreements and get more flights to Alberta from tourist source countries
- Establish a target to double tourism spending in Alberta to \$20 billion by 2030
- Make tourism the responsibility of the Minister of Economic Development and Trade

**A United Conservative government will implement a stable and predictable funding formula for Travel Alberta and facilitate private sector partnerships to get Albertans back to work.**





# CREATING JOBS IN THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Alberta's forestry sector employs over 16,000 Albertans directly and another 23,000 indirectly. Our forest companies and workers are world leaders in sustainable forestry practices and in managing Alberta's land base for future generations.

The NDP has increasingly restricted timber access with costly policies that threaten long-term timber supplies.

The United Conservatives recognize the federally mandated need to propose a caribou range protection plan, but this must be done in close collaboration with all who are affected and must be based on science and common-sense conservation policies.

We will protect, promote, and partner with Alberta's forestry workers and companies to expand this sector's economic opportunities at home and abroad.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Ensure that forest companies have long-term access to a sustainable fibre supply with our Forest Jobs Guarantee, including current quotas and forest management agreements
- Offset federal or court-ordered policies that inhibit access to fibre with access to an equal or larger area for forestry in the same region
- Support environmentally sustainable forestry practices by working with Alberta's forestry companies to optimize land management practices
- Reverse four years of NDP reductions in the fight against the mountain pine beetle by increasing funding by \$5 million to \$30 million annually
- Defend Alberta's forest sector and fight for Alberta's proper national share of trade-allocated export quotas
- Direct Alberta's foreign trade offices to work with forestry companies to improve export opportunities, especially in Asia



- Immediately form a Caribou Range Task Force of local municipal governments, the Northwest Species at Risk Committee, forestry and other industries, Indigenous representatives, and habitat scientists to review the Alberta Caribou Draft Plan
- Ensure that the province's land use consultations and planning are completed before any new long-term decisions are made on habitat protection
- Include Alberta's forestry sector in our "fight back strategy" against foreign funded attacks on Alberta's resources
- Ensure that the caribou range plan, and any other environment policies affecting the forestry industry, are subject to a comprehensive social-economic impact assessment

**A United Conservative government will fight for our forestry sector – not against it – so we can get Albertans back to work.**





# THE ALBERTA ADVANTAGE IMMIGRATION STRATEGY

Alberta has always been a magnet for immigration, and all Albertans benefit from the entrepreneurial drive and skills that newcomers bring.

However, too many immigrants arrive with the great hopes and skills that Canada needs, only to become trapped in survival jobs because it can take years for Canadian businesses and professional licensing bodies to recognize the credentials new Canadians have earned elsewhere.

New Albertans must often navigate these challenges while at the same time working to put food on table. This “doctors-driving-taxis” syndrome is an enormous waste of potential.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, some 524,000 new Canadians would earn as much as \$12.7 billion more, and pay more taxes, if their learning credentials were fully recognized.<sup>8</sup>

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Immediately launch consultations to develop the Alberta Advantage Immigration Strategy, which will be completed by the end of 2019. We will seek input from immigrants, employers, settlement organizations, municipalities, policy experts, and will study best practices in other provinces. The goal will be to end large backlogs, speed up processing times, proactively attract talented newcomers from overseas, and welcome job-creating entrepreneurs.
- Create a Rural Entrepreneur Immigration Program that will invite entrepreneurs to start new businesses in smaller Alberta communities
- Create a Rural Renewal Immigration Program that would prioritize AINP applications from foreign nationals who are committed to living and working in smaller communities throughout Alberta
- Create the International Student Entrepreneur Program, that will encourage foreign student graduates of Alberta post-secondary institutions to start a business and stay in Alberta permanently. Data shows that young foreign student grads with Canadian degrees and

strong English language skills are set for success and become major contributors to the economy.

- Create a Foreign Graduate Startup Visa Program that will target brilliant foreign grads of top universities in the United States who want to launch a start-up enterprise in North America but cannot get immigration status in the USA

There are hundreds of thousands of these foreign graduates, including PhDs from some of the world's best universities. The majority are experts in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Many have well developed start-up business concepts, plus venture capital lined up. Our program would be modelled in part on Chile's highly successful Startup Visa, providing qualified applicants with an immediate work permit, followed by permanent residency if they demonstrate a commitment to operating their business in Alberta.

A key part of the Alberta Advantage Immigration Strategy will be an ambitious action plan to knock down unfair barriers to the full economic inclusion of new Albertans, while maintaining our high professional standards.

## **Fairness for Newcomers Action Plan**

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Introduce the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* to help ensure that regulated professions and individuals applying are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair
- Create a Fairness for Newcomers Office with a \$2.5 million budget,<sup>9</sup> and oversight from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration. This Office will:
  - Work with trade and professional licensing bodies to streamline, simplify, and accelerate foreign credential recognition with a goal of giving applicants for licensure a clear answer within six months or less of their application
  - Publicly identify and hold accountable those regulatory bodies that have unreasonable barriers to credential recognition
- Organize a Premier's Summit on Fairness for Newcomers

- Put foreign credential recognition on the agenda of the First Ministers Meeting to push for faster action on the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications,<sup>10</sup> which is an effort to get regulatory bodies across Canada to harmonize their credentialing procedures
- Create an Alberta Government Mentorship for Newcomers Program to match immigrant professionals with mentors in the public service who can help to guide them through the process of credential recognition and finding employment at their skill level
- Support and expand the work of the International Qualifications Assessment Service<sup>11</sup> that assesses foreign degrees against the Canadian post-secondary standard
- Work with non-profit groups like Windmill Microlending<sup>12</sup> (formerly the Alberta Immigrant Access Fund) to expand access to low-interest loans to immigrant professionals who need bridge financing to upgrade their skills and pay for certification exams
- Support the work of immigrant settlement agencies to offer skills upgrading to underemployed foreign professionals
- Work with the federal government to offer pre-arrival orientation to foreign nationals selected for permanent residency in Alberta to encourage them to apply for credential recognition and educational assessments before they arrive in Canada

**A United Conservative government will enable Albertans to benefit from the entrepreneurial drive and skills of newcomers who will help grow our economy and get Albertans back to work.**

# A SMARTER APPROACH TO INNOVATION

Under the NDP, Alberta has received a D- grade in the Conference Board of Canada's most recent innovation report card in research and development outcomes. In comparing Alberta to other provinces and 15 other countries, Alberta also received an overall grade of D in early stage R&D support, patents, and venture capital investment.

Alberta gets these failing grades while the NDP continues to announce hundreds of millions of dollars in deficit-financed spending grants to companies they barely understand, without a clear definition of success.

Meanwhile, our province is not preparing a workforce suited to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. 67% of employers in Alberta say the lack of access to digitally skilled talent is the biggest obstacle to growth. Companies are forced to move out of the province, or country, to fill these needs.

Finally, entrepreneurs and businesses looking at different potential jurisdictions to set up a new business find the Alberta government extremely hard to navigate. Under the NDP, innovation initiatives involve multiple government agencies with funding and advisory platforms that don't communicate or share information effectively. Sometimes they even inadvertently compete with each other.

United Conservatives believe that the government has an important role to play in fostering innovation, particularly through ensuring Albertans are receiving proper training.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Drive innovation by creating the best business environment in Canada. A business wanting to expand and hire should view Alberta as the most attractive place in North America
- Fix the current approach to innovation funding by simplifying the way starts-up and growth companies secure public – and private – funding. We will reduce duplication and coordinate across the many investment agencies in the province. Investments of public money will have a clear 'return on investment' criteria

- Apply technology and process improvements to the government itself in order to lead by example. The government will actively engage in pilot projects to test global 'best practices' that can help deliver public services faster, more securely, and at lower cost
- Make Alberta a destination for global entrepreneurs through the creation of streams within the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program

**A United Conservative government will streamline programs and use a smarter approach to innovation to modernize our economy and get Albertans back to work.**





Alb  
**"Dirty" oilfield  
money puts food  
on my table,  
clothes on my  
back, and a roof  
over my head.**



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**2**

# **MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR ALBERTANS**

# MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR ALBERTANS

A full life includes work that provides not only a living, but dignity. That is why a United Conservative government's first priority will be to boost our economy and bring quality jobs back to Alberta. However, "the good life" includes much more than material well-being.

While government can't guarantee a good life, it has a central role in establishing many of the conditions for it like health, safety, education, and support for the vulnerable.

The United Conservative plan to make life better for Albertans includes the following commitments:

- **A Patient-Centred Health Care System** that will use innovative reforms within the *Canada Health Act* while maintaining or increasing health care funding to get Albertans the high-quality care they deserve
- **Education** will be strengthened by working with parents, teachers, principals, and trustees to protect school choice, improve accountability, and deliver the best possible outcomes for our children
- **Post-Secondary Education** will be supported as critical both to Alberta's future economy and to a vibrant Alberta
- **Skills for Jobs** will promote experiential and vocational learning from high school through post-secondary and into the workplace
- **The Justice system** will become fairer, faster, and more effective in protecting the safety of every Albertan
- **We will Protect Vulnerable Albertans** with legislation and increased funding for Alberta's specialized law enforcement agencies that combat domestic violence, stalkers, child exploitation and abuse, gang activity, and drug trafficking
- **Partnering with Non-Profits, Charities, and Volunteers** will help create a brighter future for Albertans who need a hand up by assisting the groups best positioned to help Albertans in their communities

- **We will Make Life Better for Seniors** and their families by using the Affordable Supportive Living Initiative (ASLI) to build the long-term care beds we need, encouraging more home care options, and maintaining existing seniors' benefits
- **A Heroes Fund and Veterans Scholarships** will honour the noble service of our military and first responders with improved fatality benefits, PTSD coverage, and scholarships
- **An Inclusive Disability Agenda** will support Albertans with disabilities to live full lives with dignity and equal opportunities
- **Municipalities** will get more autonomy and predictability while we ensure transparency for voters
- **More Affordable Housing** will be built in Alberta for those who need it, including seniors in need of specialized housing
- **Arts and Culture** will grow steadily through facilitated collaboration with philanthropists and private businesses
- **Alberta's Indigenous Peoples** will be partnered with to secure adequate supports and pursue opportunity
- **Our Environment** will be protected by a common-sense conservation plan which recognizes that that recreation, economic use, and conservation can and should support each other
- **Albertans' Property Rights** will be thoroughly protected by a new *Alberta Property Rights Protection Act* and a review of all existing legislation
- **Democratic Reforms** will give more power to Albertans to hold the provincial government accountable

# BETTER PUBLIC HEALTH CARE FOR ALBERTANS

*"Albertans already pay for the most expensive health system of any province in Canada. Yet they receive results that lag the results being achieved by the best performing health systems in other jurisdictions. Albertans are paying for the best. Why would they not demand the best?"*

-The Auditor General of Alberta, in 2017

The NDP's mismanagement of our health care system has left Albertans waiting in pain for surgery, while also carrying the bill for the most expensive system in Canada. The NDP are spending more while getting less.

Since the NDP were elected:

- Open-heart surgery wait times have increased by nearly 50%, from 14.9 weeks to 22.2 weeks
- Cataract surgery wait times have increased by nearly 30%, from 29.9 weeks to 38.4 weeks
- Hip replacement wait times have increased by nearly 30%, from 28.7 weeks to 36.7 weeks
- Knee replacement wait times have increased by 23%, from 33 weeks to 40.7 weeks
- The percentage of patients from the Emergency Department (ED) treated and admitted to hospital within eight hours, has declined from 46% to 43.9%

Under the NDP, patients face longer emergency room wait times, worse emergency room outcomes, declining outcomes for youth mental health care, longer wait times for hospital beds, and longer wait times for surgical procedures.

Under a United Conservative government, patients will be put at the centre of the health care system. It's time to do things differently and put patients first. We will cut surgical wait times, make major investments to reverse Alberta's opioid crisis, support mental health, and improve both primary and palliative care for Albertans.

## Public Health Guarantee

### A United Conservative government will:

- Maintain or increase health spending and maintain a universally accessible, publicly funded health care system

## Reduce Surgical Wait Times

### A United Conservative government will:

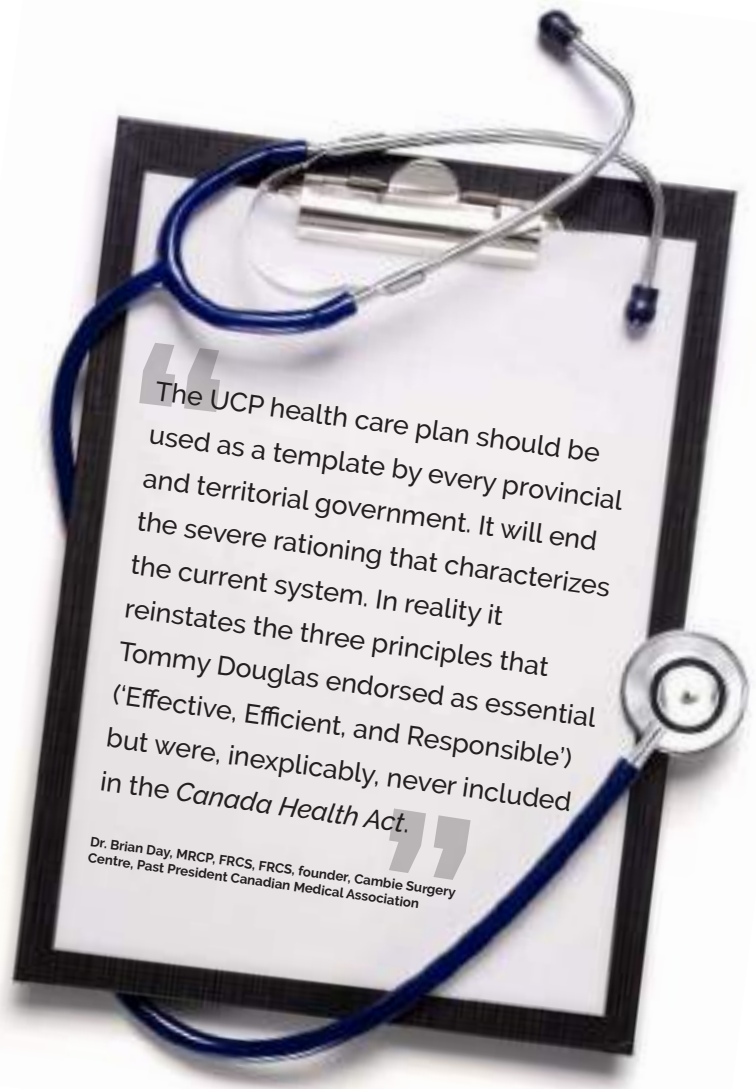
- Reduce surgical wait times to no more than four months in four years by replicating elements of the highly successful Saskatchewan model for health care reform, the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative (SSI).

At the start of the SSI in 2010, 27,500 residents were waiting for surgery and over 15,000 waited three months or more. Four years later, only 3,800 patients were waiting more than three months for surgery, a 75% reduction.<sup>13</sup>

Former Saskatchewan NDP Finance Minister Dr. Janice Mackinnon studied the success of the SSI, concluding that it succeeded because it put patients, rather than providers, at the heart of the system, and because strong leadership held the system accountable to achieving a three month wait time for most surgeries.<sup>14</sup>

Her findings have been echoed by research conducted by the Canadian Institute of Health Research<sup>15</sup> and a 2015 Wait Times Alliance report, which found that “in five years the number of (Saskatchewan) patients waiting more than six months for surgery had dropped by 96%.”<sup>16</sup>

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in its 2005 Chaoulli decision that “access to a waiting list is not access to health care,” and that unreasonable surgical wait times imposed by governments may constitute a violation of the “security of the person.”<sup>17</sup>



“The UCP health care plan should be used as a template by every provincial and territorial government. It will end the severe rationing that characterizes the current system. In reality it reinstates the three principles that Tommy Douglas endorsed as essential ('Effective, Efficient, and Responsible') but were, inexplicably, never included in the Canada Health Act.”

Dr. Brian Day, MRCP, FRCS, FRCS, founder, Cambie Surgery Centre, Past President Canadian Medical Association

Thousands of Albertans are forced to wait for a year or longer for various surgical procedures, often in pain as their physical condition deteriorates. Alberta's system is the most expensive health care system in Canada, and one of the most expensive publicly insured systems in the world. And this is despite the NDP increasing health spending by \$3 billion, while wait times have continued to climb under their watch.

A United Conservative government would respect the spirit of the Chaoulli decision (which legally only applies to Quebec) by establishing an ambitious goal of reducing those waiting for more than three months for surgery by 75% by the end of our first term.

According to former NDP Minister Mackinnon, one of the key reasons for the success of the SSI was that it invited specialized private day surgical clinics to bid on providing government insured surgeries. The data demonstrates that these clinics completed surgeries for 26% less than government hospitals on average, meaning more patients got treated at lower cost, reducing the number of people waiting in pain for surgery.<sup>18</sup>

## **Opioid Response Strategy**

One of the reasons we have a growing opioid addiction crisis in this province is because so many people waiting for surgery are being prescribed powerful pain killers which turn into a debilitating addiction in too many cases. Two people die in Alberta every day due to opioid addiction. It is a public health emergency.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Appoint an Associate Minister for Mental Health and Addictions to make this a political priority of a future government
- Invest \$40 million over four years to launch an Opioid Response Strategy that expands support for opioid treatment centres to deal with wait times and increases access, including additional detox beds, mobile detox programs, and funding a new Virtual Opioid Dependency Program
- Establish a dedicated Opioid Enforcement Team within the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT) to target aggressive investigation and disruption of opioid manufacturing and dealing at a cost of \$10 million over four years
- Expand Drug Treatment Courts, including new ones outside of Calgary and Edmonton, with an investment of \$20 million over four years



- Call on the federal government to increase resources for drug interdiction and to restore mandatory minimum penal sentences for drug traffickers
- Ensure that provincial funding programs are determined based on evidence – including ensuring eligibility for successful faith-based models
- Work with physician groups to understand what more can be done to reduce the prescription of powerful opioid drugs that have a high incidence of addiction and ensure general practitioners have training in opioid replacement therapy

## **Mental Health and Addiction Strategy**

Albertans want those living with addictions to be treated with compassion. That is why we are committed to expanding support for opioid treatment centres and detox beds.

**A United Conservative government will:** invest \$100 million over four years to implement a Mental Health and Addiction Strategy based in part on the report of the Alberta Mental Health Review Committee.

The Mental Health and Addiction Strategy will:

- Increase earlier access to addiction and mental health services through primary care centers
- Expand home care to support those who identify addiction and mental health as a primary concern
- Support Albertans in crisis by expanding programs to more communities including police and crisis teams, provincial family violence treatment programs, diversion programs and drug treatment courts, and by developing mental health court models
- Increase access to mental health services and reduce recidivism as well as use of emergency departments for those in contact with the criminal justice system
- Support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people and communities by establishing a continuum of addiction and mental health services, ensuring service provision is not disrupted by jurisdictional disputes and increasing access to services to manage the impact of Indian Residential Schools on mental health

## **Supervised Consumption Sites**

United Conservatives want to see those with addictions helped, but they also want their parks, neighbourhoods, and communities to be safe. We will take a sensible, targeted, and compassionate approach to the issue of supervised consumption sites.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

- Only endorse new supervised consumption sites if there have been extensive consultations with affected communities, including residents and business owners, and if there is a robust evidence-based analysis of the socio-economic impact of a potential drug consumption site
- Only endorse new Overdose Prevention Sites if they have clear plans to provide treatment services
- Conduct an evidence-based socio-economic analysis of the impact of existing drug consumption sites
- Consult with local communities, police, municipalities, and others on the location of existing sites to determine if they are optimal, or if better locations could be found that would reduce the impact of crime, discarded needles, and other negative social and economic impacts on local neighbourhoods

## **Palliative Care**

The 2016 legalization of assisted suicide underscores an urgent need to educate Albertans about palliative care, why it matters, and which services are available. Now more than ever, the health care system needs to ensure access to high quality palliative care to alleviate suffering.

### **A United Conservative government will invest \$20 million over four years to:**

- Continue to shift from hospital to community-based home and hospice care
- Establish and implement palliative care education, training, and standards for health professionals
- Develop effective caregiver supports to support patients in their homes and community
- Raise public awareness of palliative care and how and when to access it

## Improving Primary Care

### A United Conservative government will:

- Expand already successful innovations in the health care system, in particular the “medical home” care model of the Crowfoot Village Family Practice. The Health Quality Council of Alberta studied ten-year outcome data from Crowfoot and found that:
  - Crowfoot's patients visited the emergency department 13% less than the Calgary average, and were admitted to hospital 17% less than the provincial average
  - Crowfoot achieved same-day/next-day access for patients in the year it was reviewed (2013)
  - Crowfoot's physicians see an average of 1,650 patients compared with the provincial average of 1,200 patients
  - 20% of patient encounters were provided by multidisciplinary teams

## Finding Efficiencies in the System

### A United Conservative government will:

- Conduct an Alberta Health Services Performance Review to identify administrative savings, and move that money to front-line services
- Increase the budget of the Alberta Health Quality Council (HQCA) by \$1 million annually to establish more measurements and increase health care quality outcomes for patients
- Provide Albertans with increased choice of medical practitioners by increasing the number and scope of nurse practitioners in Alberta and allowing nurse practitioners the ability to bill directly to Alberta Health
- Expand the scope of practice of other health professionals, such as opticians, optometrists, and paramedics
- Lift the cap on midwifery services. Many expectant mothers would like to choose midwifery services for childbirth, but the NDP has capped access to the service. Increased midwifery services in Alberta would both reduce costs for the health care system and increase the standard of care
- Review the Connect Care contract and My Health Care Records to reduce potential duplication of services and ensure maximum effectiveness

- Modernize paper health care cards to be combined with either driver's licenses or provincial photo ID cards as a multi-use Personal Identification Card
- Save \$200 million by stopping the NDP's plan to buy laundry machines for AHS by maintaining more efficient, competitive contracting for these services
- Save \$640 million by cancelling the NDP's unnecessary 'Superlab' and nationalization of laboratory services

**A United Conservative government will make patients the priority and deliver a world-class health care system, which Albertans already pay for and deserve.**

# MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

## RENEWING EDUCATION

Under the NDP, class sizes in Alberta have continued to increase, math and reading scores have declined, Alberta's successful tradition of school choice has been under attack, the carbon tax has taken valuable resources away from classrooms, and curriculum changes have been taking place largely in secret. Alberta's children deserve an excellent, world-class education that will equip them intellectually, socially, and with jobs-ready skills for life.

To ensure that education is a key advantage for Alberta, a United Conservative government would work with parents, teachers, principals, and trustees to once again make Alberta's schools the diverse, excellent classrooms that all Albertans desire and deserve.

The United Conservatives recognize that every child is unique and that parents, not politicians, know what is best for their children.

### **A United Conservative government will:**

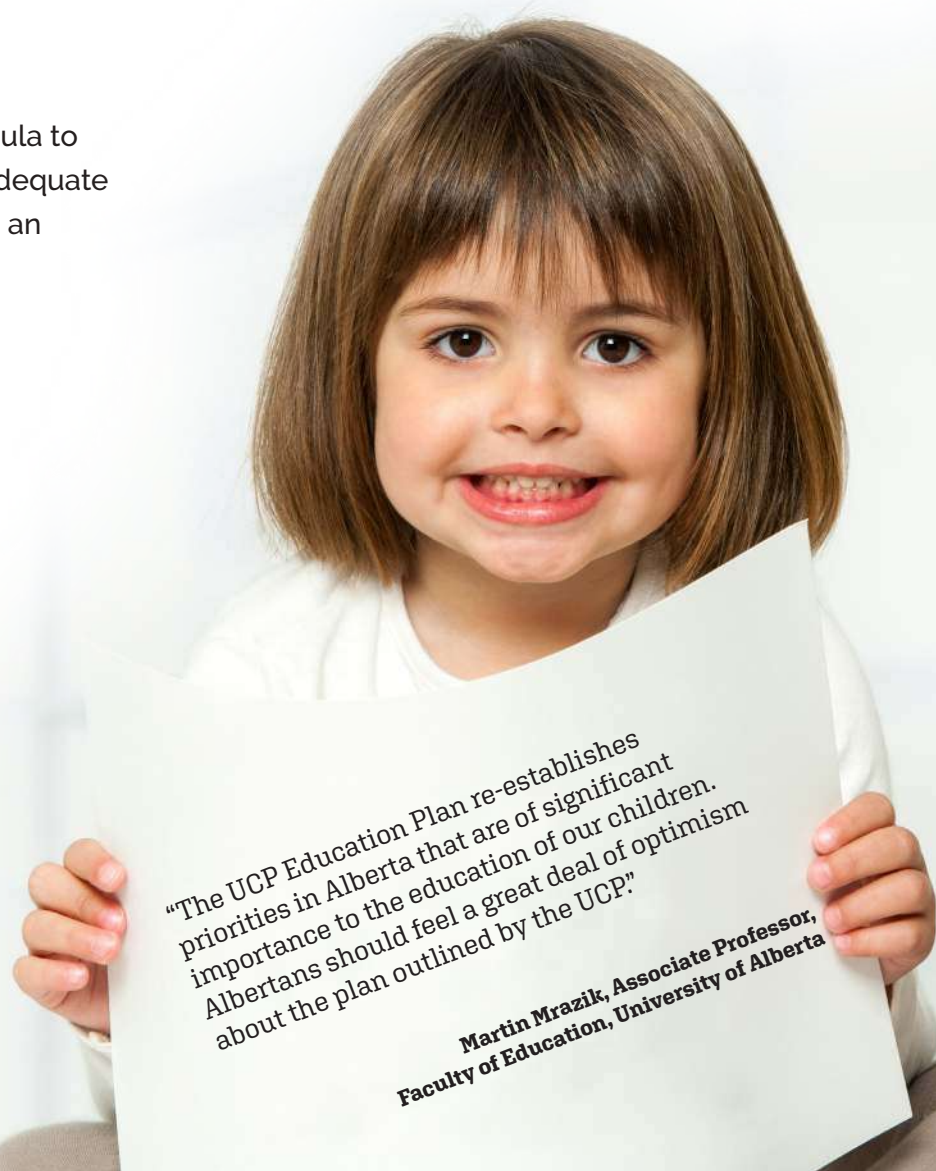
- Maintain or increase education funding while seeking greater efficiency by reducing administrative overhead and pushing resources to front line teachers
- Continue to build new schools, while ordering an immediate audit of class sizes to determine what happened to previous funding dedicated to class size reduction, and prioritize public infrastructure funds for schools and health care infrastructure
- End the focus on so-called "discovery" or "inquiry" learning, also known as constructivism, by repealing Ministerial Order #001/2013 and replacing it with a new Ministerial Order which focusses on teaching essential knowledge to help students develop foundational competencies
- Pause the NDP's curriculum review, and broaden consultations to be open and transparent, including a wider range of perspectives from parents, teachers, and subject matter experts

- Curriculum reform should begin by determining the key knowledge and skills that Alberta students should possess by the time of their high school matriculation, written in plain language that students, parents, and teachers can understand
- The curriculum should focus on developing foundational competencies
- Teaching methods should focus on those that produce the best outcomes, such as phonics and proven math instruction methods
- The social studies curriculum should be taught without political bias, offering an objective understanding of Albertan, Canadian, and world history, geography, and civic literacy
- Financial literacy should be a mandatory element woven throughout the curriculum
- Consent must be taught as an essential part of the sexual education curriculum
- Reform student assessment so that students, parents, and teachers can clearly identify areas of strength and weakness. This will include:
  - Bringing back the Grade 3 Provincial Achievement Test
  - Returning to a 50/50 split between Diploma and school grades for Grade 12
  - Implementing language and math assessments for students in grades 1, 2, and 3 to help both parents and teachers understand and assess progress in the critical early years, and remedy where necessary
- Require clear, understandable report cards
- Focus on excellence in outcomes, with measures that include:
  - benchmarking the Alberta education system against leading global jurisdictions
  - ensuring teachers have expertise in subject areas by introducing teacher testing
  - expanding options for schools to facilitate expertise



- requiring that the education faculties in Alberta's universities themselves require that teachers take courses in the subjects they will one day teach in schools.
- Support safe schools that protect students against discrimination and bullying
- Reinforce the need for open, critical debate and thinking as key to lifelong learning
- Proclaim the *Education Act* (2012), taking effect on September 1, 2019
  - A UCP government will trust the hard work done by those who created the 2012 *Education Act*, and proclaim that legislation, already passed by the Legislature
  - Unlike the NDP's curriculum review, conducted largely in secret, the *Education Act* resulted from years of widespread public consultation
- Introduce a *Choice in Education Act* which will:
  - Affirm parents have primary responsibility for the education of their children
  - Add to the preamble of the *Education Act* recognition of Section 26.3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children"
  - Protect the status and funding of independent schools in legislation given that they save the public education system \$168 million annually
- Facilitate the creation and operation of new charter schools by:
  - Lifting the cap on the number of charter schools
  - Lifting charter school enrolment caps
  - Allowing charter schools to own property
  - Treating charter schools as priorities above other possible uses for surplus public-school infrastructure
- Support and encourage an expansion of alternative programs in the public system
- Respect the constitutional right to separate schools

- Maintain funding for independent schools and home schoolers at current levels
- Encourage the sharing of busing and infrastructure where appropriate, while respecting the distinctive nature of both systems
- Ensure that requests from parents for blended homeschool programs are facilitated
- Amend the *Education Act* to implement the Leadership Quality Standards
- Reduce paperwork burdens on teachers, principals, and other school staff, and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens throughout the system
- Review and implement selected recommendations from the Task Force for Teaching Excellence including:
  - Establishing alternative pathways to teaching certification for those in specialized areas of knowledge
  - Introducing more regular assessment of teacher performance
  - Ensuring subject matter competence
- Review the current funding formula to ensure that rural schools have adequate resources to deliver programs in an equitable way



# SUPPORTING AND REFORMING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Alberta's post-secondary institutions are critical to building an Alberta that is open for business and to supporting a modern, diverse workforce and society. A United Conservative government will focus on increased institutional and individual choices, from universities to the trades and technical institutions.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Reduce provincial red tape and mandates on universities and colleges, freeing them to innovate and compete more and comply with bureaucratic mandates less
- Measure labour market outcomes of post-secondary programs to identify the correlation between provincial subsidies and economic returns for taxpayers
- Encourage efforts by Alberta universities and colleges to attract more qualified foreign students. (Alberta post-secondary institutions are well below the national average, and leaders in the information technology sector report that their principal challenge is a shortage of labour with relevant skills)
- Establish the most effective intellectual property framework for the commercialization and entrepreneurial application of innovative research and development from Alberta's universities and colleges
- Work with universities and industry associations to measure Alberta's performance against leading global research and government networks in key innovation hubs like California, Texas, Israel, London, and Hong Kong
- Require all universities and colleges to develop, post, and comply with free speech policies that conform to the University of Chicago Statement on Principles of Free Expression

**A United Conservative government will continue to support post-secondary education as critical both, to Alberta's future economy and to a vibrant Alberta.**

# SKILLS FOR JOBS

Apprenticeship learning has every bit as much value as academic learning, and skilled trades have every bit as much value, merit, and worth as a university degree.

That's why a United Conservative government will create opportunities for young Albertans to learn practical job skills that meet the demands of the labour market and that will help them succeed and build prosperity for all Albertans. We will reinvent the vocational high school.

Alberta faces the dual challenge of retirement among skilled workers and the worst youth employment in decades. The Department of Labour predicts that from now to 2025, more than 3,000 skilled workers will retire every year creating a steady demand for apprentices and skilled tradespeople. Alberta needs to get ahead of these trends.

The NDP have failed these young people. We don't want them leaving Alberta. United Conservatives want to help prepare our young women and men to go to work and to give them hope for a great future – right here in Alberta.

The United Conservative plan will help young Albertans into apprenticeships, the skilled trades, and vocational education.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Double the number of schools that CAREERS: Next Generation currently works with from 500 to 1,000 and quadruple the number of students and full-time apprentices from 1,567 to 6,000 by 2023 by providing CAREERS with over \$6 million annually by 2022/23
- Dedicate \$1 million for trades scholarships for 1,000 students who show promise in trades in high school
- Support the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's new collegiate in Edmonton with a \$28 million contribution, and budget for \$28 million to expand that model in Calgary and eventually to other centres as well

- Reform teacher certification to enable qualified tradespeople to teach and bring their skills to the classroom without requiring a full Bachelor of Education degree
- Modernize the Alberta Employment Standards Code to enable junior high school students to work in co-op programs on job sites
- Appoint a Skills for Jobs Task Force to report to the government on how to reform education in order to expand opportunities for vocational education and the skilled trades
- Increase support for Skills Canada Alberta with funding of \$2 million over four years so that young Albertans can participate in its Skills Canada National Competition and demonstrate their skills and talent on the national and world stage
- Support the creation of an Alberta Trades Hall of Fame to honour Albertan tradespeople who have left their mark on our province through their work
- Expand the Women Building Futures program with \$10 million over four years to support women who wish to pursue opportunities in the skilled trades
- Work with other provinces and territories to better harmonize provincial mobility for apprentices and skilled tradespeople
- Expand the apprenticeship model to other careers with emerging demand such as coding and green technologies
- Invite applications for vocation-focused charter schools
- Create a Premier's Council comprised of vocational education leaders, trades unions, and other stakeholders to meet regularly with the Premier and relevant ministers to advance vocational education as a government priority

**A United Conservative government will increase the focus on skills for jobs from high school through post-secondary and into the workplace.**

# CRACKING DOWN ON CRIME

The first duty of government is to protect public safety.

On that score, this NDP government has failed. Crime has risen steeply since the NDP took over with its soft on crime approach. A United Conservative government will act to give our police and prosecutors the tools and resources they need to protect law-abiding Albertans and put serious criminals behind bars.

Crime is up substantially in Alberta, with police services across the province reporting significantly higher robberies, assaults, sexual assaults, vehicle thefts, and property theft compared with five years ago. Maclean's, *in Canada's Most Dangerous Places 2019*, says 7 of the 10 cities with the worst increases in crime over the last five years are here in Alberta. Albertans are also concerned about lax sentencing, early release, and a crisis in our courts created by the NDP and federal Liberal governments.

Albertans deserve a better justice system that protects them, their loved ones, and their property.

## **A United Conservative government will:**

- Spend \$10 million to hire 50 new prosecutors and support staff
- Enact the *Public's Right to Know Act* which will require annual reporting by judicial district on a wide number of measurements such as the number of crimes committed by persons on bail, on probation, on parole, subject to a deportation order for criminality, or previously removed for criminality
- Implement the United Conservative Alberta Rural Crime Strategy as outlined in our 2018 report to protect rural Albertans
- Invest \$5 million to increase access to Drug Treatment Courts as an effective way to help drug addicts leave the cycle of crime
- Conduct an immediate review of the current model of victim service delivery, victim assistance funding, and victim compensation to ensure there is necessary assistance to victims of crime



- Conduct an immediate review of the sufficiency of medical and forensic evidence gathering services in rural communities in cooperation with local police, Crown, and medical authorities, to determine what improvements are required - particularly concerning sexual assaults
- Develop and implement a specific Repeat Offender Policy with both provincial and (recommended) federal components to increase our ability to keep dangerous offenders off our streets
- Negotiate additional Queen's Bench Justice appointments with the federal government, including requesting that Grande Prairie be given its own Queen's Bench justices, to help alleviate case waiting times
- Work with other provinces and the federal government to ensure the return of criminals apprehended on outstanding arrest warrants to the province from which they fled, which has been flagged as a particular problem in provinces like Alberta with overlapping and independent police forces
- Update the Crown Prosecutors' Policy Manual to require that prosecutors provide the Court with an offender's past criminal record and outstanding charges during bail hearings
- Direct a review of the Crown Policy Manual to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to whether the use of force defence in Sections 34 and 35 of the Criminal Code should preclude prosecution against victims of crime with consideration of such factors as:
  - The awareness of the person of a significant delay or non-response of police to the request for assistance due to the remote location of the crime being committed
  - The failure of the offender to depart the premises when confronted which, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, shall be viewed as threatening
  - The number of persons committing the crime and the perception of their intoxication by alcohol or drugs
- Review current Criminal Code sentencing principles to ensure and recommend that in rural crime offences, specific facts be considered by a sentencing court as aggravating factors, and that the principles of deterrence and denunciation be prioritized (particularly concerning the unique vulnerability of people in rural areas when it comes to their self defense).

- Replace the Parole Board of Canada with an Alberta Parole Board for offenders serving a sentence of less than two years

**A United Conservative government will make life better by prioritizing the safety of every Albertan with a fairer, faster, and more responsive justice system.**

"The rise in crime across Alberta in recent years has been challenging for Albertans, including law enforcement officials trying to respond. The plan put forward by Jason Kenney and the United Conservative Party will have a meaningful impact in addressing these challenges. The significant investment in prosecutors and the front lines will be a direct investment in our communities and will make a difference where it matters most. This is a comprehensive plan to address crime that will produce results."

Rick Hanson, former Calgary  
Police Chief

